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SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-seventh year

Letter dated 12 November 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to present to you the attached letter dated 11 November 1992, from my Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Haris Silajdzic, to the United States of America Acting Secretary of State, the Honourable Lawrence S. Eagleburger.

May I ask for your kind assistance in circulating the letter as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 143, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador and
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 11 November 1992 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina addressed to the Acting Secretary of State of the United States of America

I want to assure you that the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina greatly appreciates the assistance that has been provided to it by the international community. We are especially grateful for the generosity of the United States Government. With winter approaching, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina are in need of this help now more than ever before.

Nevertheless, we are surprised by the United States proposal to deliver humanitarian assistance through Belgrade. The incongruity of this proposal is obvious when one considers that Belgrade is the source of criminal aggression against the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We object to this proposal also because we believe it would substantially strengthen the position of those who are making every effort to destroy us. As in the past, we are again compelled to choose between humanitarian assistance and self-preservation.

First, the proposal is part of an unfortunate tendency of attempting to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina without consulting the legitimate Government of that State.

Second, the Belgrade route is only one of several possible avenues for delivery of humanitarian assistance to our country. Aid can be delivered as well, or better, through the airport in Tuzla, by way of the Orasje-Tuzla-Sarajevo corridor, the Ploce-Sarajevo corridor, through Hungary, or through Zagreb, Split and other cities in Croatia.

Third, this proposal rewards the aggressor. Already, its representatives are using the proposal, in their public statements, as an example of their willingness to cooperate, while they proceed with genocidal aggression. Moreover, the proposal would better secure an already ethnically cleansed part of our country, allowing Belgrade to expand its ethnic cleansing operations elsewhere.

Fourth, the proposal relies on pledges from aggressor forces and other entities that have, throughout the crisis, broken their promises and threatened UNPROFOR forces. Establishing a corridor via Belgrade would make a new lifeline vulnerable to manipulation by forces that are more than eager to use food, water, electricity and gas as weapons of war.

Fifth, the proposal would produce substantial hard currency for the Belgrade regime, thus weakening an already unsuccessful economic embargo and improving Belgrade's ability to support aggression. We find the injection of hard currency into the Serbian economy difficult to reconcile with the West's frequently announced intention to strengthen sanctions.

Sixth, the proposal would offer easy opportunities for diversion of materials into the aggressor's black market. Security of the Belgrade route would depend upon the very forces which would be most inclined to indulge in such action.

Instead of providing the aggressor with new bargaining chips, the international community should provide us with the means to defend ourselves and to defend UNPROFOR convoys, using the routes that my Government proposed some time ago.

This would include use of the airport in Tuzla, which we have repeatedly requested since June, the Orasje-Tuzla-Sarajevo corridor or the Ploce-Sarajevo corridor. Tuzla airport can handle all international aircraft and is secured by government forces. All three options can more efficiently serve the same area as the proposed Belgrade-Sarajevo corridor.

With all due respect, we ask you to reconsider the proposal to provide humanitarian assistance through Belgrade.

(Signed) Haris SILAJDZIC

cc: The Honourable Cyrus R. Vance
Lord David Owen
President of the Security Council